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19 December 2013

Mr Stafford John
Headteacher
Cayton Community Primary School
Mill Lane
Cayton
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO11 3NN

Dear Mr John

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cayton Community Primary School, North Yorkshire

Following my visit to your school on 18 December 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in October 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are not taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the last section 5 inspection and plans are not sharply focused on rapidly bringing about improvement. The school should take immediate action to:

- ensure that greater focus is given to the progress pupils are making over time when evaluating the quality and impact of teaching
- revise the improvement plan so that it is more helpful in assisting school leaders to check the implementation and measure the impact of agreed actions.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you and your deputy headteacher. Together we undertook a brief tour of the school and visited all classrooms. I met with members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority to

discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also evaluated the school development plan and other monitoring evidence including performance management targets, lesson observation and progress data documents.

Context

There have been no changes to context since the inspection.

Main findings

Following the inspection both staff and governors were very disappointed that the school required improvement. Governors spoke about their “devastation” at hearing this news. You and your deputy headteacher have worked hard and acted quickly to get staff and most governors to accept this. As staff have the desire to become a good school within 18-24 months you have rightly stressed that it is about working with greater focus in tackling those aspects that are not yet good.

Nevertheless the latest inspection report along with the 2013 outcomes for Year 6 pupils make it clear that school leaders have not been effective enough in successfully tackling weaknesses in teaching over a longer period of time. While the school development plan does include all the areas for improvement that were identified during the inspection the plan still has some significant weaknesses.

Since the inspection you have revised and implemented a new marking policy which aims to see all pupils act upon teacher feedback and marking. Your own recent monitoring, coupled with visits we made to lessons, shows that while some teachers are following the marking policy others are not. There are too many occasions when teachers make comments that are not acted upon by pupils. This was especially true in mathematics which has been an area for improvement over the last two inspections. You have also undertaken more lesson observations to check the quality of teaching since the inspection. However, these observations and subsequent feedback to teachers give too great an emphasis to a ‘snapshot’ of a lesson rather than the overall impact of teaching on pupils’ progress over time. Consequently, some judgements made about teaching may be overly-generous.

The plan is not as helpful as it could be as a tool for school improvement. The plan lacks clarity about how and when pupils’ progress will improve. The role that governors and others will play in evaluating progress is also not clear. This means that, while you are encouraging governors to challenge more, they will find it difficult to do so because the plan lacks clear and measurable outcomes.

Governors are keen to see the school become a good school within the next 18-24 months. However they still have further to travel in terms of providing effective challenge to you and other leaders. Governors were “shocked” at the poor progress Year 6 pupils had made in reading and mathematics. A greater focus on pupil

progress and comparisons with national averages would help them to increase their awareness and confidence in challenging you and other leaders.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The local authority regularly visits the school and has plans to link the school with a good or outstanding school by early January 2014. The local authority has been over-generous in believing that the school is a "stone's throw away" from being a good school. The school has a much longer and harder journey towards achieving good within the next 18-24 months. The local authority has not been challenging enough in highlighting to school leaders and governors the weak progress that some pupils have made. It has also not ensured that the school improvement plan is a strong feature of the school's approach to getting to good.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire and as below.

Yours sincerely

Phil Smith

Her Majesty's Inspector

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- DfE - Academies Advisers Unit [colin.diamond@education.gsi.gov.uk] – for academies